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M O R E

LYRIC ODES

T O T H E

ROYAL ACADEMICIANS.

James H. ...

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M O R E
LYRIC ODES

TO THE
Academica's *Royal Academy*
ROYAL ACADEMICIANS,

K
B Y A
D I S T A N T R E L A T I O N
TO THE
P O E T O F T H E B E S,

A N D
LAUREATE to the ACADEMY.

——— *Vidi, vidi, ipse libelle,*
Auriculas asini Mida Rex habet. — PERS.

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M D C C L X X X V .

1800

LYRIC ODES





LYRIC ODES.

O D E I.

SONS of the brush — stay, that wont do —
My former Odes may lie perdue
'Mongst boarded catalogues on some bye shelf:
For that my choice poetic crumbs
Have fodder been for Artists bums,
To think, would be injustice to myself.

Besides, to steal my own good wit
Would only shew a lack of it,
And rank me with some modern bards we know:
Better ye teach, who from old prints
Steal, under guise of borrowing hints,
From the great Raphael down to poor Watteau.

A

This

This is no very great transgression,
 When neatly done, and with discretion,
 But saving two or three, y'are pilf'ring sots,
 Who, if within Dame Justice gripe,
 Would wince beneath the beadle's stripe,
 In fellowship with those that steal quart pots.

Better ye drove some honest trade,
 Than strove for what ye were not made :
 Part of your art ye might retain at will ;
 Indulge your rage, and paint a shutter,
 Or make fine prints on Cambridge butter,
 Perfection here requires no such great skill.

Sad was the hour, and eke the day,
 When signs were banish'd the midway ;
 All *signs* of hearty meals were banish'd then !
 No lamb, like youthful ensign furious,
 Blue boar, green dragon, nought that's curious,
 To wake your dormant pow'rs to life again.

Poor Catton, in those golden days,
 (Heav'n knows I speak it to his praise)
 Stood high in rank, of sign-painters the Titian.
 Th' assembled 'squires in council sat,
 Grudg'd him his growing fame and fat,
 So dubb'd him, in pure spite, *Academician* !

O! were

O! were it by kind heav'n decreed
 A son of mine should be a painter,
 I'd have him taught to *write* and *read*, —
 It would not make his genius fainter.
 Who seeks to rival Raphael, trust me, friends,
 Should have more pow'rs than at his fingers ends.

I'd rake his brain, with learning sow it,
 And strive to make the painter poet;
 For this would motion to his heroes give;
 With magic make his pencil glow,
 Give all it's force to joy or woe,
 And bid the portrait on the canvass live.

The want of ev'ry lib'ral grace
 Hath mark'd you an unpolish'd race,
 Disgraceful to the art, a vulgar crew—
Artist! Heav'ns, that a name so fair
 Should be synonymous to *Bear!*
 Ye may be gentlemen and painters too.



O D E II.

REYNOLDS, the ladies all declare
 Thy canvasses jack-towels are,
 Aye, and the very coarsest can be found :
 And that thy colours too, so glaring,
 (Of which they cannot say thou'rt sparing)
 Don't stand thee in at most, three-pence the pound.

What dame is that upon her back,
 Who much a petticoat doth lack ?
 Sure, by her charms 'tis Venus Meretrix ;
 And Cupid, from behind the tree,
 Laughs at what all the world may see :
 Ah ! roguish Knight ! are these thy merry tricks ?

Should'st thou e'er like Pygmalion burn,
 Let not thy guts to cinders turn ;
 Nor steal from Heav'n wherewith to feed desire ;
 Make but a chink, and in it stick
 An inch or two of candlewick,
 The melting dame will quickly be on fire.

'Twere

'Twere pity too, should ought destroy
 A nymph so fair, a nymph so coy,
 Jove only such another could create.
 Ah! might I so get matters rang'd,
 To paint and canvass I'd be chang'd,
 To be th'immortal nymph's immortal mate.

This room will much thy pencil lack,
 When thou art laid upon thy back,
 With bum as cold as clods of earth can make it.
 Who'll brave the taste that fashion brings,
 And soar, like thee, on eagles wings?
 Pity the *Art*, and do not soon forsake it.



O D E III.

WH Y you're improving, Mr. West!
 That you have this year done your best,
 There's not a foul, I'm sure, but well believes:
 That charming picture from Gil Blas —
 Gil Blas! — The Eucharist. — O la!
 Pardon, I took it for a den of thieves.

Thy landscapes praise who would not choose?
 Observe the *climax*! — Sing, O Muse,
 Of fows and pigs, all in the fore-ground grunting;
 Of cows, as lovely Iö fair,
 Of bulls, whose form great Jove might wear,
 Of Lords and Kings, all in the back-ground hunting.

Of clouds (to give them such a name)
 That vie in colour with the frame;
 Of docks, that might with cabbages compare;
 Of trees, enwrought so artfully,
 They'd rival any tapestry,
 "Such are thy wond'rous works!" O rare! O rare!

Who can dispute with thee the prize
 For throwing dust in people's eyes?

Of

Of all its arts, the chief your art can boast.
Those leaves with Spanish brown enrich'd,
Who would not swear some taylor stich'd,
And with his goose had given them a roast?

Continue painting by the yard,
Thou'lt meet one day a just reward —
How well thy canvass would become a vessel!
Methinks e'en now thy faints I spy
In troops before the north-wind's eye,
Wafting up dirty colliers from Newcastle.

Thy *Envy*, West, provokes my Muse
To quit thy works, and thee abuse,
Which else a want of candour would betray:
Thy withers, which are not unwrung,
Should make thee dread the galling thong,
Which thou on Reynolds dost so smartly lay.

Do not, when a limb thou'rt judging,
Point, and sneering cry, *A pudding!*
Tho' Reynolds paint not canvasses for floors,
(Which, 'faith, I cannot say of thee)
Say not, without some better plea,
They look like rotten eggs against barn doors.

Simelus, once a Captain bold,
Weary of wars, and growing old,

Pray'd

Pray'd that he might retire, and leave was giv'n :
 When dying, to make others room,
 He left these words to grace his tomb,
 " Tho' many years on earth, I've liv'd but seven."

" What's this to me?" you sneer and say,
 Patience, good friend! do thou too pray,
 That envy's film may from thee taken be;
 Then thou'lt exclaim with grateful sighs,
 " For many a year have I had eyes,
 " Yet never till this moment could I see."



O D E IV.

MONSIEUR Le Clerc, I think, most gravely says,
 (But 'faith just where I cannot rightly tell)
 Thousands are ign'rant what a poet is,
 Videlicet, cannot define him well.
 What more he says my calling does no credit,
 Still, as it serves my purpose, you shall have it.

Mark me, 'tis his particular desire,
 If in your walks you stumble on a poet,
 You'd always hold him a confounded liar :
 His pompous air will but too plainly shew it.
 He might have said of painters just as much,
 But left that virgin theme for me to touch.

In truth, I can't reflect without much sighing,
 How very grossly ye are giv'n to lying,
 For proof of which look only round the room,
 And see Dame Nature chaste and staid,
 Describ'd a brazen trumpery jade,
 And dizen'd out in meretricious bloom ;
 And us, true men of blood and bone,
 Stiff as Medusa's, star'd to stone,
 Which, heav'n be prais'd, is not as yet our doom.

But that I may not seem to rail,
 With empty noise and crazy pate,
 Tell me, are any of you in a tale,
 Except that Nature's out of date?
 Yet each will swear, he's only in the right,
 Though one paints Nature *black*, the other *white*.



O D E V.

LET me look round. — A goodly shew !
 No want of work t'abuse, I trow ;
 Here, as the grave, all enter, good and bad.
 Those wait a joyful resurrection,
 The artists wait my predilection,
 With looks, like Quixote's lean, like Quixote's fad.

Cheer up, my friends, be not afraid !
 There cannot better filks be made,
 Than Copley late at Windsor manufactured :
 They're durable, and stiff as card,
 Aye, I might say as marble hard--
 The castle walls could sooner far be fractured.

Your *judgment*, Sir, all must commend,
 In making filks that stand an end,
 To dress your little Royal Ladies in :
 'Tis a crime to make Princesses
 Look like *other* little Misses —
 Hoppner alone would dare commit such sin.

He who loves yellow, blue, and red,
 May to this picture turn his head,

Where

Where he will see enough t' admire and praise.
 Odsniggers ! how the scarlet dyers,
 And gaping dames from Crutched Fryers,
 Slabber your tawdry miffes as they gaze !

Jove's scone was so confounded thick,
 That Vulcan thump'd till he was sick,
 When of Minerva he was brought to bed :
 The limping God at thine would stop,
 Not all the Cyclops in his shop
 Could hammer ought of art from thy thick head.

You, like the Rhodians,* raise no pyre,
 But sacrifice without the fire
 To young Minerva, and like them of old,
 Your worship meets with numbsculls luck,
 Who if they have not brains to fuck,
 Get well rewarded with a show'r of gold.

* The Rhodians were by their father the Sun, made acquainted with the birth of Minerva, and ordered to sacrifice to her immediately, but they forgot in their hurry to put fire under their victims. — DIOD. SICULUS.

Yet Jove approving, o'er th'assembly spread
 A yellow cloud, that dropp'd with golden dews. — PINDAR.

O D E VI.

PAINTERS, for once take my advice,
 You'll please the Ladies to a tittle;
 Cut up your Magogs in a trice;
 O! give delight, and paint in little.

Paint first a fine carved elbow chair,
 Take heed the work be richly burnish'd; —
 Of fine vein'd marble slabs a pair,
 Your pictures can't be too well furnish'd.

Next a rich curtain with gold strings,
 Two china jars, a book, a fiddle,
 A pair of globes, so like the things,
 That dogs may go, and 'gainst them piddle.

Now dress your lady up in fatten,
 Tinkling a guitar so cheerly:
 A pretty parrot would come pat in,
 Parrots, you know, love music dearly.

But that your works may not be scann'd,
 Strike out with something that is new;
 Paint with your foot instead of hand. —
 To rise, you must be with the few.

D

Say

Say you were suckled by a bear,
Or, like the Thund'rer, by a goat :
Those, who won't at your pictures stare,
Will come to see your hairy coat.

Many a vagrant artist now
Lives well by practising this habit,
Tho' once he liv'd the Lord knows how,
Mew'd in a hole like a lean rabbit.

These are no days for parts, I ween,
So burn your stilts, for by the mass,
We make no difference between
The generous steed and driven ass !

For me, tho' blest with Phœbus' lyre,
And born on Fancy's strongest wing —
No steaks of mine would see the fire,
Did I of Gods and heroes sing.
Could I, like Homer, chant Achilles' feats,
I might, like Homer, chant them in the streets.

'Tis buying fame by far too dear,
If when one's gut with hunger twitches,
We see no crust, nor garlic near,
Nor feel one stiver in one's breeches.

While

While quacks in easy chairs go rocking,
And with your Lords get fav'ry dinners ;
Merit must coax his worsted stocking,
And crouch to publicans and sinners.



O D E VII.

READER, didst ever see a turnip grin,
 With hollow eyes, nose, mouth and chin,
 Stuck up, by way of head, on empty barrel,
 Dreft out br gamesome boys in men's apparel?
 Never, say you; then look at my Lord Peter,
 So looks his body, so each vacant feature.

How comes it, Peters, thou who'ft been at college
 Didst not impart some of thy little knowledge
 To the Grand Masters? zooks! their upper stories
 Look so like tenements to let,
 That I would lay an even bet,
 Your Rev'rance is a Whig, their Lordships Tories.

Were I his Grace, but I may wish,
 Could I but eat out of his dish,
 By me he'd be advis'd, or he a drone is,
 On Nature's law of bone for bone,
 To use your head, as you've his own—
 This would be paying you, *lex talionis*.

Richard, I hope thou wilt not stone us
 For sniggering at thy *Pastor Bonus*.

How

How knowing thou art grown, my friend, at once ?
Pastor ! why this of *learning* smacks !
 And *Bonus* too ! torture and racks !
 Why, man, I always took thee for a dunce.

Thy fellow we shall never light on, —
 Thou art, indeed, a very Crichton,
 A little devil, or a devil's imp ;
 Sure, ev'ry thing thou dost excel in !
 The Muses do thy temple dwell in ;
 A hero thou, philosopher, or ———.*

On that fair youth in tin array'd,
 Thou hast thy usual art display'd :
 Who would not swear 'twas painting at first sight ?
 The cloak, which thou'dst for fatten pass,
 We soon perceiv'd was only brags —
 Richard, confess thy paintings all a bite.

Attend, dear Dick, I may be able
 To give thee counsel in a fable :
 A hungry dog, while proggng for a dinner,
 Espy'd some liver in a pond,
 For which he would have giv'n his bond,
 Have it I will, said he, as I'm a finner.

* Here an unfortunate blot had effaced the original word ; but the rhyme and the diminutive size of our subject render it not improbable that it might have been *Shrimp*. — PRINTER'S DEVIL.

And how d' ye think he schem'd it out ?

Why first he'd drink the pond quite dry ;
To compass which he did not doubt,

So straight began to try.

'Tis easy guess'd how the poor devil sped,
He burst himself all thro' his silly head.

So thou, good Richard, dost but vainly strive,

When thy weak pencil the fair canvass stains,
Unless indeed, thou couldst some how contrive
To get new eyes, and a fresh stock of brains.



O D E VIII.

REYMEUR — Your worships know, I wist,
That Reymeur was a naturalist
So clever,
That he could couch a dew-snail's eye
Or shoe a gnat, or geld a fly,
With any Ashton Lever.

This Reymeur then would take it on his foul,
That *spiders*, if you could contrive
To make them work together, cheek by jowl,
Would prove the neatest artisans alive?
And weave you filks, so fine, that in a week
All Copley, and all Spitalfields would break.

Now I've been thinking, if ye chose
To join your pow'rs,
Ye might a wond'rous piece compose,
To bless this age of ours.

Maria Cofway, from old Offian's store,
Will bring a tale of Rawhead—so tremendous!
So full of beef, and blood, and grits, and gore,
So stuff'd with storms and tempests—heav'n defend us!

That

That honest folks will shudder in their beds.
Is this too little for her? she'll do more,
And furnish Gods and devils by the score,
And *ghosts* with monstrous *arms*, and *men* with monstrous *heads*!

Let not, dear Dick, thy manhood flame,
At being plac'd beneath thy dame,
(For ye have settled this, 'tis said, between ye)
And we'll find out a pretty nook,
Where thou, dear Dony,* with a crook,
May'st drive two scabby sheep, and woo thy Veny.

What's this to Ossian? 'faith not much;
And yet your worships with a touch
All time, all place, all property confound:
Have I not seen *Judea* spread
Her *native* palms o'er *Beachy Head*,
And all *Palmyra* rise on *Gothic* ground?

But to return.—Your Vanderpuyls
Will find your heroes wooden sculls,
And West good garments — none so good as his;
Peters rich lace to edge their caps,
Copley (a dabster at eye-traps!)
Macaws and lacquer'd chairs, and flow'ry trees.

* Domesticè, for Adonis.

Reynolds, for he has paint to spare,
 Will rub his knightly fingers bare,
 To have the sword-hilts and the bucklers burnish'd :
 (His *taste* and *skill*, the partial elf
 Will keep, I fear me, to himself,
 N' emporte) And there's, I hope, a picture furnish'd.

But tell me, can such tricks as these
 An eye, that's worth the pleasing, please ;
 Or do you toil for fools applause alone ?
 And swell with rapture as they gloat
 On the lac'd hat and golden coat,
 And cry — Odsheart ! how like the thing 'tis done !

O fools ! fools ! fools ! — The batter'd jade,
 Skill'd in the myst'ries of her trade,
 With tawdry rags thus charms the rustic's eyes :
 While more experienced gazers see —
 See with abhorrence — poverty,
 Dirt and disease, beneath the gay disguise.



O D E IX.

THESE bitter odes, ye cry, by hatred penn'd,
Stab "in their eyeless rage" both foe and friend;

In truth your worships very rightly cry —
But why are ye indeed such harmless things?
Learn it from me, because ye have no stings,
Or faith I would not at your mercies lie.

Mistake my purpose not, nor idly rate,
'Tis not the artist but his works I hate;
His sad cold daubings, which so shiver us,
His wretched, shapeless, tame abortions,
His would-be grace, but vile distortions;
From things, like these, "good Lord, deliver us!"

My cousin Pindar's strains, as well as mine,
Were heard by those who would not think them fine;
But with obstrep'rous envy strove to drown:
To chatt'ring jays the bard compar'd their cries,
While he, like Jove's own eagle, pierc'd the skies,
And on their efforts look'd contemptuous down.

This was a pretty modest simile !
 Another ye shall have as good from me,
 Whom ye would fain see like the lion sick :
 O ! had I not this pow'r to hurt,
 By heav'n I'd stake my only shirt,
 There's not an ass among you but would kick !

F I N I S.

This was a pretty modest little
Another ye shall have as
Whom ye would
O! had I not this pow'
By heav'n I'd take my only hint
There's not an ale among you but would like



